

time and resources examining competition in the online ticket marketplace isn't going to solve the problem that caused this mess. To do that, we need to back up and understand how bots actually work.

All ticket sellers use technological safeguards to impose limits on the number of tickets each buyer can purchase. Your average ticket buyer doesn't have the skills to sidestep those limits, but modern-day scalpers do. All they need to do is write a software program—or a bot—to get around those safeguards. Because of the way these bots work, one scalper can purchase hundreds or thousands of tickets in just seconds after they go on sale. When this happens, real consumers end up at the back of the line because no matter how fast you click, you are not going to beat a bot.

Fortunately, we already have a way to solve this problem that will benefit both the artist and their fans. In 2016, when I was still serving in the House, I led congressional efforts to pass the Better Online Ticket Sales Act, also known as the BOTS Act. Senator SCHUMER led that effort here in the Senate.

This bill made it unlawful for scalpers to circumvent the controls used by ticket issuers to limit sales. It also created a backstop: If the scalpers do manage to get their hands on too many tickets, the BOTS Act made it illegal for scalpers to resell those tickets on the secondary market. The BOTS Act passed the Federal Trade Commission with enforcement authority, but the FTC has not followed through.

In January 2021, the FTC took its first and only enforcement action under the BOTS Act against three New York-based brokers for conduct that began in 2017. That is one enforcement action in 6 years.

Now, one of two things can be true here: Either the existing enforcement mechanisms are faulty, or the FTC's approach to using them is faulty. This is the investigation that we should focus on.

I want to thank my colleague, Senator BLUMENTHAL, for helping me kick it off. This week, we sent a letter to the FTC asking a few very simple questions about how they are using their BOTS Act authority.

First, does the FTC have any pending enforcement actions?

Second, why has the FTC only undertaken a single enforcement action to date?

Third, are there any obstacles preventing the FTC from exercising its authority?

And, finally, are there other solutions Congress needs to consider in conjunction with the BOTS Act?

The Commissioners have a choice. They can either tell us how we can expect them to use their BOTS authority in the future, or they can tell us what they need to get the job done.

The trickle-down effects of their failure to enforce the law have put music fans in a bind, but it is important to

remember that the entertainment industry is not the only industry that will suffer if the FTC does not do its job.

Especially since the beginning of the pandemic, we have seen entire industries move their operations online. This has presented scalpers and bot programmers with a golden opportunity to branch out and start forcing consumers into secondary markets for sports tickets, movie tickets, sneakers, video game consoles, popular toys, and other items that come with limited availability. In 2021, tickets for the opening of the newest Spiderman movie went for \$100 on the secondary market—which is about five times the regular price of a movie ticket.

Now, you may not care about concerts or movies, but consider how this could eventually trickle down to affect the things that you really do care about. Anywhere you find that combination of scarcity and popularity, you are going to find bots blocking access to the market. And for the average person, there is nothing that individual is going to be able to do about it.

We, however, can do something about this; but as I said, an antitrust investigation isn't going to get the job done. If my colleagues want to fulfill their promise to fix the problems that led so many music fans to be disappointed earlier this month, they need to join me and Senator BLUMENTHAL in working with the FTC to enforce the law against these ticket scalpers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, one of the greatest challenges we have is climate change. We are seeing the cost of inaction: the flooding that is occurring very frequently here in the United States and around the world; the forest fires that we have experienced here in the United States; droughts; extreme weather events occurring more frequently, including in my own State, where we had two 100-year floods within 20 months in Ellicott City, MD; climate migrants, people who can no longer live in their communities because of the rising sea levels. It is an urgent issue for us to address.

So I want to share with my colleagues the recent codell I led to the COP27 climate discussions at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. I was joined in that codell with Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator MARKEY. We were there November 10 through 12 for approximately 2½ days.

COP27 is the United Nations climate change conference. It was my fourth conference that I have led Senators to attend to deal with the climate issues with the international community.

My first was in 2015, COP21 in Paris, in which the U.S. leadership under the Obama administration was able to bring together the global community to a commitment that we needed to limit the rising heat—rising tempera-

tures to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius. But we also needed that commitment among all nations. And we got that in Paris. It was a major accomplishment, thanks to U.S. leadership.

I returned to a COP23 meeting in 2017 in Bonn. That is when President Trump had withdrawn the United States from the climate discussions and from Paris. We were there to make it clear that the United States was still committed to our participation in doing what is responsible to reverse the trend of rising climate heat.

I then attended the COP meeting in 2021, COP26 in Glasgow. I was pleased to report at that time with my colleagues that America was back. This was after President Trump had withdrawn and President Biden reengaged the United States in the global climate discussions. We were very strong in our language, but the international community wanted to know if the United States would back those words with action.

So I was very pleased that in 2022, at the COP27 meetings in Sharm el-Sheikh. We could say, in fact, that the United States was back, that we have acted; we have taken action. And I must tell you that the international community was very impressed by what we have been able to do in this Congress, what the Biden administration has been able to do on the climate agenda. In fact, one complaint I got is that—from our traditional allies is that we may have done too much, and they are not sure they can compete with us in regards to the renewable energy industry. That is a nice situation for us to be in as the leader of the world.

So we talked about the passage of the bipartisan infrastructure bill, which was our first major investment into electric vehicle infrastructure for green infrastructure.

But the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act was a game changer. It was the largest investment in climate change by a nation ever—\$369 billion we were able to get done. It provided many incentives and many different buckets in areas in order to deal with our commitment to reduce emissions. It provided incentives for electric vehicles. It provided incentives for a battery supply chain here in the United States. It provided incentives for offshore wind, a major renewable energy source. And the list goes on and on and on.

It included a major commitment on environmental justice, because we know vulnerable communities are more vulnerable, those that are the traditionally underserved communities are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We need to make sure that we help these communities deal with these challenges.

The bottom line that what we can report at the COP27 conference is the United States is on target to meet our emission goals. We have taken decisive action in order to achieve the goals

that President Biden announced of a 50- to 52-percent reduction in emissions over 2005 levels.

That was good news for the international community and provided, I think, the type of energy in Egypt that allowed us to make progress.

We were there for 2½ days. We had over 30 meetings. I must tell you we were a popular group. Many countries wanted to meet with us. We had a lot of bilateral meetings. We do this because we recognize that every country must meet its goals if we are going to be able to achieve the emission reductions that are necessary. So we made ourselves available to listen to the concerns of other countries. Some of them were our traditional allies that are fully industrialized nations; some of them were developing countries. We all understood that we all need to find a way to meet our emission reductions goals if we are going to be able to avert the most severe consequences of climate change.

We met with many foreign officials. We met with the U.N. officials that are responsible to conduct the conference. We got a good briefing as to the politics of trying to get 190-plus nations together on the same page on these issues—not an easy task. We met with global business leaders.

We met with the indigenous community leaders, because the indigenous communities—particularly in the developing countries—are the ones who are the most vulnerable. They are living under very difficult circumstances. And when we asked them not to deforest the land in which they are living on which they do for farming practices or we ask them to make certain sacrifices, they are saying: Well, why should we be making these sacrifices when the developed nations didn't do that way back when?

So we need to be concerned about the welfare of all these communities.

We met with civil society leaders, because you cannot have success in a strategy to deal with climate unless we have the buy-in from all of the stakeholders.

And, yes, we met with our leaders, the U.S. leaders. I want to give a special shout-out to our former colleague John Kerry, who has been one of our principal leaders in negotiating on behalf of the United States and has traveled the world in order to increase countries' commitments to emission reductions.

The theme for the 2 days that we were there, the theme every day at the COP meetings—one was Decarbonization Day, and the other was Adaptation and Agriculture Day.

On decarbonization, it was right on message of what we are concerned about. We talked about meetings that we had with the power sector as to how we needed to use the incentives we have in America and then globally to have clean energy credits to bring down the emissions that are being created through the fossil fuels in cre-

ating energy. We talked about how we in America can use the credits that are in the Inflation Reduction Act to show the international community how we can all help in reducing emissions.

We also had a chance on Adaptation and Agriculture Day to listen to President Biden. President Biden attended the COP27 meetings and gave I think a very important address to all of the conferees about America's leadership. It was Adaptation Day, and the President announced additional funds that America committed to the Adaptation Fund to make it clear that the United States is going to be part of these efforts.

I must tell you, we met with the Pakistani delegation. We expressed our condolences over the loss of thousands of citizens of Pakistan due to the consistent and continuance flooding that has taken place in that country. A large portion of Pakistan is really not habitable today because of sea level increases and the effects of climate change. Adaptation is very important. They don't have the resources for adaptation.

(Ms. SMITH assumed the Chair.)

Madam President, I was just at the Naval Academy this past week, where we had a groundbreaking for raising the seawall in order to protect the Naval Academy. That is something we have to do to adapt to the realities that we have—more frequent high-tide flooding in Annapolis. We had the resources to do that. Pakistan does not have the resources to protect their population.

The United States and the international community must work on adaptation, but it is not a substitute for mitigation. Our principal way to deal with climate is to make sure we reach our emissions goals and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions so that the worst effects can be avoided. Mitigation and adaptation are critically important. We need to do both.

Now, I will tell you, the most controversial discussions that took place at COP27 dealt with the international climate financing issues. You may have heard about the loss and damage discussions that took place there, and it is controversial. It is not controversial, what we are trying to achieve.

I pointed out and my colleagues Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator MARKEY pointed out that the United States has been very actively engaged with the developing world to help develop their green infrastructure. We do that through USAID and the work they do around the world. We do it in the Millennium Challenge grants and the work they do around the world. We do that in our participation with international banking institutions to provide credit to the developing countries so that they can develop green infrastructure, particularly in the energy sector. We do that through many bills we pass here.

I will just give you one example. I am proud of the Neotropical Migratory

Bird Act, that I was partially responsible for making sure that we funded that. That provides grants for habitats for migratory birds. That money is almost all spent in other countries. I was just recently in South America, and they were thanking us for the work they have done in regard to this program in protecting the habitat for migratory birds.

So the United States does a lot in regard to international financing. We share our technology. It is U.S. technology that is being used by these countries in order to develop their infrastructure.

Our objective is clear: We want the developing world to have green infrastructure that gives them reliable energy, gives them reliable transportation. We want them to do that without deforestation, without taking away their forests. We want them to do that without using their fossil reserves. For that, we have to be active participants in international financing to help them. We are that. We are a reliable global partner, and we made that point over and over again.

I will just give you one more example of how we are helping. Senator MENENDEZ has introduced what is known as AMAZON21, a bill I hope we can pass in this Congress. It provides help to preserve forestation around the world. It is named for the Amazon, of course, which is the greatest treasure we have in our hemisphere on forest lands that are very much subject to being lost.

I joined Senator MENENDEZ in Ecuador recently, and we talked to leadership there about what they are doing to protect the Amazon. They need help so that the indigenous population does not have to cut down the forests in order to farm. We need to be helpful in that, and AMAZON21 would be the U.S. response to help to maintain the forests. Why do we want to maintain the forests? Twenty percent of the global carbon emissions is occurring through deforestation. It is a huge source to meet our goals that we need to meet.

COP27 was held in Egypt, and we cannot go to Egypt without mentioning the human rights concerns that we have in that country. Thousands of journalists, protesters, and activists are in jail today without trial solely because they are trying to report the news or disagree with their government or be environmentalists.

That is wrong, and we raised those issues. We met with the families of some of the victims who are in jail today, and we met with the Foreign Minister of Egypt in order to raise these issues. We will continue to raise these issues and urge the Egyptians to release those who are being held for just expressing their views or being journalists. That is wrong, and they need to be released.

Lastly, let me just compliment the U.S. leadership at COP27. I already mentioned Secretary John Kerry. John Kerry has done a great service to this country and to the global community.

He has traveled the world. He has gotten countries to move a lot further than I think any of us thought was possible. I want to congratulate our former colleague for the work he has done on the climate issues. I want to also acknowledge Assistant Secretary Monica Medina, who worked tirelessly during COP27 in order to get results.

We are certainly not satisfied with everything that happened at COP27. Let me make that clear. There were disappointments. We would like to have seen an increase in the emissions targets, much more than have been made. We have to do better. They only made modest progress on mitigation. But important progress was made in forest protection. So we did make progress, and we brought the international community together in order to recognize that this is a global problem.

I am so proud that the U.S. leadership is back on the international scene, leading the international community to do what we need to do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and avert the most severe consequences of climate change.

With that, I would yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Robert Phillip Storch, of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General, Department of Defense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes for debate, equally divided.

Mr. CARDIN. I yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON STORCH NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Storch nomination?

Mr. CARDIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 367 Ex.]

YEAS—92

Baldwin	Blunt	Cantwell
Barrasso	Booker	Capito
Bennet	Boozman	Cardin
Blackburn	Brown	Carper
Blumenthal	Burr	Casey

Cassidy	Kennedy	Rosen
Collins	King	Rounds
Coons	Klobuchar	Rubio
Cornyn	Lankford	Sanders
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Schatz
Cramer	Lee	Schumer
Crapo	Lujan	Scott (FL)
Cruz	Lummis	Scott (SC)
Daines	Manchin	Shaheen
Duckworth	Markley	Shelby
Durbin	Marshall	Sinema
Ernst	McConnell	Smith
Feinstein	Menendez	Stabenow
Fischer	Merkley	Sullivan
Gillibrand	Moran	Tester
Graham	Murkowski	Thune
Grassley	Murphy	Tillis
Hassan	Murray	Tuberville
Heinrich	Ossoff	Van Hollen
Hickenlooper	Padilla	Warner
Hirono	Paul	Warren
Hoeben	Peters	Whitehouse
Inhofe	Portman	Wicker
Johnson	Reed	Wyden
Kaine	Risch	Young
Kelly	Romney	

NAYS—3

Braun	Cotton	Hawley
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NOT VOTING—5

Hagerty	Sasse	Warnock
Hyde-Smith	Toomey	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be notified immediately of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Virginia.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. KAIN. Mr. President, I rise to offer a unanimous consent request for the approval of two important nominees to ambassadorial positions that have passed through the Foreign Relations Committee, and the first that I want to offer deals with seeking to advance the nomination of William H. Duncan for the U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador.

I appreciate that my colleagues—two colleagues from the Republican side—are here on the floor to respond to these requests.

Mr. Duncan is a 30-year veteran of the career Foreign Service. He has experience serving throughout the Western Hemisphere region: El Salvador; Monterrey, Mexico; Mexico City; Asuncion; Madrid; Bogota; and Matamoros. He has also served domestically in the Offices of Andean Affairs, Mexican Affairs, and Central American Affairs. He has had a tour in Baghdad and in the State Department Operations Center.

I say this not to bore everybody with a long recitation, but because Mr. Duncan has had a pretty incredible career. And it is near impossible to imagine a career more fit to purpose and a nominee better suited to serve an enormous and unique challenge that the United States faces today in El Salvador.

The United States faces a very tough question in El Salvador right now, and that is the current President of El Salvador, President Bukele. He is locally very, very popular, but he has utilized his popularity for malfeasance. He has exploited weak local institutions to begin to undermine civilian society and build up a security state. He has

imprisoned around 50,000 of his own citizens since just March of this year and curtailed the civil right of the remainder.

Members of Bukele's party have openly meddled directly in U.S. legislative elections.

Experts increasingly doubt the country's ability to pay nearly \$800 million in Eurobond payments that it owes coming up in February. A default could spur a fresh round of migration northward from El Salvador to Mexico and the United States.

My friends across the aisle frequently—and, I think, appropriately—cite migration as a top foreign policy challenge, and they have got a point. The size and scope of this crisis, compounded by El Salvador and President Bukele's actions, and the humanitarian impact on the entire region and our country are worsening by the day. I agree that the issue needs much, much more attention, and El Salvador is right on the frontline of this crisis.

I lived in Honduras, very near the Salvadoran border in 1980 and 1981. It was a challenge then. It is a challenge now. No country can, on its own, confront the myriad of challenges facing El Salvador today, transnational organized crime being one of them.

So we have to work together to strengthen the rule of law in El Salvador. That is essential if we are going to discourage irregular migration. Without the rule of law, El Salvador will never have the economic growth that it needs nor will it be able to prevent human rights abuses and attacks on civil liberties, reduce gender-based violence, or defeat the threat from criminal gangs, all drivers of irregular migration.

Addressing these drivers and other serious U.S. policy concerns requires engagement at the highest level by experienced, incredible interlocutors, such as Mr. Duncan. We urgently need a Senate-confirmed Ambassador to engage President Bukele in El Salvador and civil society, including the courageous human rights activists, on these issues.

As Mr. Duncan noted in his testimony in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the relationship between the United States and El Salvador has been exceptionally close for more than 40 years, despite many, many challenging issues. Through a horrific civil war, a fraught peace process, and into today's challenges, such as fighting transnational organized crime, the United States has worked cooperatively with El Salvador in everything we can and disagreed firmly and constructively when we needed to.

It is worth noting that over these years, many Salvadorans have become our fellow citizens, including right here in the DMV, through processes such as TPS status. Two and a half million Salvadorans live in the United States. They proudly contribute to our national fabric through their creativity and work ethic and to El Salvador